

Strolling in Houston

Proud Sam Houston Walks on Texas Soil in Full Uniform, but Busy Houstonians Fail to Stare

By SIGMAN BYRD
The Stroller

THE LATE GEN. SAM HOUSTON, liberator of Texas, would have been astonished and delighted, I feel, if he could have strolled with me into the old City Hall yesterday and seen his grandson, Capt. Sam Houston III, at the adjutant's desk in the district Army recruiting office.

Astonished, surely, to learn that the captain has been alerted for shipment to the Far East—probably Korea—sometime in January. For the adjutant still expects to spend Christmas at his home in Galena Park, and when he hops off early next year, he probably will get to Korea in less time than it took Gen. Houston to march from the Brazos River to Buffalo Bayou in 1836.

Pulse Is Normal

Delighted, certainly, to know that a man called Sam Houston still walks daily in the streets of the town bearing his name, and wearing the uniform of the United States Army. It seems likely, however, that the general might have been disconcerted at finding the grandson of the hero of San



BYRD

Jacinto conducting himself as casually as the average businessman. No fine white stallion, but a well-used sedan that could stand a new paint job, waits at the curb outside the captain's office. Neither gold-galloonied frock coat nor sword, but only plain khakis, for the captain's uniform. If he overparks, he gets a ticket, and when he walks past the site of the capitol of the Republic of Texas, heads do not turn; hands are not lifted in salute. Ask the captain how the blood of empire builders feels in a man's veins, and he says it feels no different from that of a newspaper reporter or a GI.

Confederate Soldier

But the 55-year-old captain likes to relate the tales handed down in his family, and he told one only recently unearthed from the past by his cousin, Temple H. Morrow of Lubbock.

Sam Houston Jr., the general's eldest son, left West Point to join the Confederate army, and with his father's full consent. This despite the fact that Gen. Houston strongly opposed secession and came near nomination for President by the New York abolitionists. Sam Jr., fighting with Col. William Rogers' First Texas Infantry, fell at Shiloh and was left on the field for dead.

Saved by Bible

A Union physician and a chaplain, strolling over the field after the Yankee victory, saw the

wounded soldier move and went to him. Exclaimed the chaplain: "Doctor, this is the son of General Houston! We must save him."

Save him they did, but only, says the captain, because a Bible in his breast pocket had deflected the Yankee ball from his heart. On the flyleaf of the bullet-pierced book, they found inscribed: "To my beloved son, Sam Houston Jr., from your devoted mother, Margaret Houston."

Captain Houston never made West Point. He failed to pass the entrance examinations in 1914, joined the Army anyway and got his commission just the same, serving as a lieutenant in the First World War. Now on loan to recruiting from the Corps of Military Police, he probably will find himself in a provost marshal's shoes again early next year.

Loved Andrew Jackson

Only two mementos from the lifetime of the great revolutionary leader ornament the office of Sam Houston III. One is an iron carillon bell, found in Houston Heights near the spot where Gen. Santa Anna camped in the spring of 1836, on his way toward the sack of Harrisburg and his subsequent defeat at San Jacinto. The other, posted to the base of a desk lamp, is a typewritten copy of General Houston's words spoken on the occasion of a duel over politics: "My firm and undeviating attachment to Gen. (Andrew) Jack-

son has caused me all the enemies I have, and I glory in the firmness of my attachment. I will die proud in the assurance that I deserve and possess his perfect confidence."

Trainmen's Hobby

"HOW ABOUT THE orders for the Sunset Limited?" says George Wimberly.

"Okeh," says Lou Taverner. "No. 245 meets the Limited at Liberty. You also have a mile of slow track just east of Dayton."

The train is made up and waiting, a long, gleaming file of chair cars and pullmans, and in a moment the drivers start churning the locomotive's wheels, and No. 2 is under way.

Club Formed

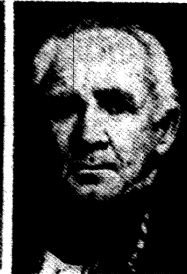
Eight men watch the operation with eight smiles of contentment, although there's not a living soul aboard the train. The dining car clicks over the switchfrogs, water-glasses sparkling on snowy tables under bright lights. The train flies past a spur of boxcars, climbs to a higher level, finally pulls to a stop at a lighted station. "No. 2 arriving in Beaumont on time," says Mr. Taverner, who is vice-president of the Houston Model Railroad Club and owns the most complete pike in town.

Pike is model railroad talk, and means the place where a model railroader keeps his model (Turn to STROLLING, Page 8)

Strolling



Capt. Houston



Gen. Houston

(Continued From Page One)

railroad. Mr. Taverner, of Southern Pacific's equipment service accounting division, has his pike in its own frame building in the back yard of the apartment house where he lives, at 4311 Harrisburg. His seven friends are also members of the club's board of directors. Mr. Wimberly, of Pacific Fruit Express, is secretary.

Steal Kids' Stuff

No mere toy for children, but a fine and intricate set of precision-built equipment, is Mr. Taverner's 18-by-20-foot mountain section

of model railroad. Every piece of rolling stock is built to scale from S. P. blueprints. There are 700 feet of 1 1/4-inch track fastened to ties with more than 75,000 spikes. Thirty electrical switches control his five locomotives, 50 freight cars, 14 chaircars, four pullmans and one diner.

"Fun?" says Mr. Taverner. "It's the most popular hobby in the world, with 25,000 club members in North America and the United Kingdom. Just ask any man who owns a pike!"